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AN ADDRESS TO THE INTERIOR CABINET.

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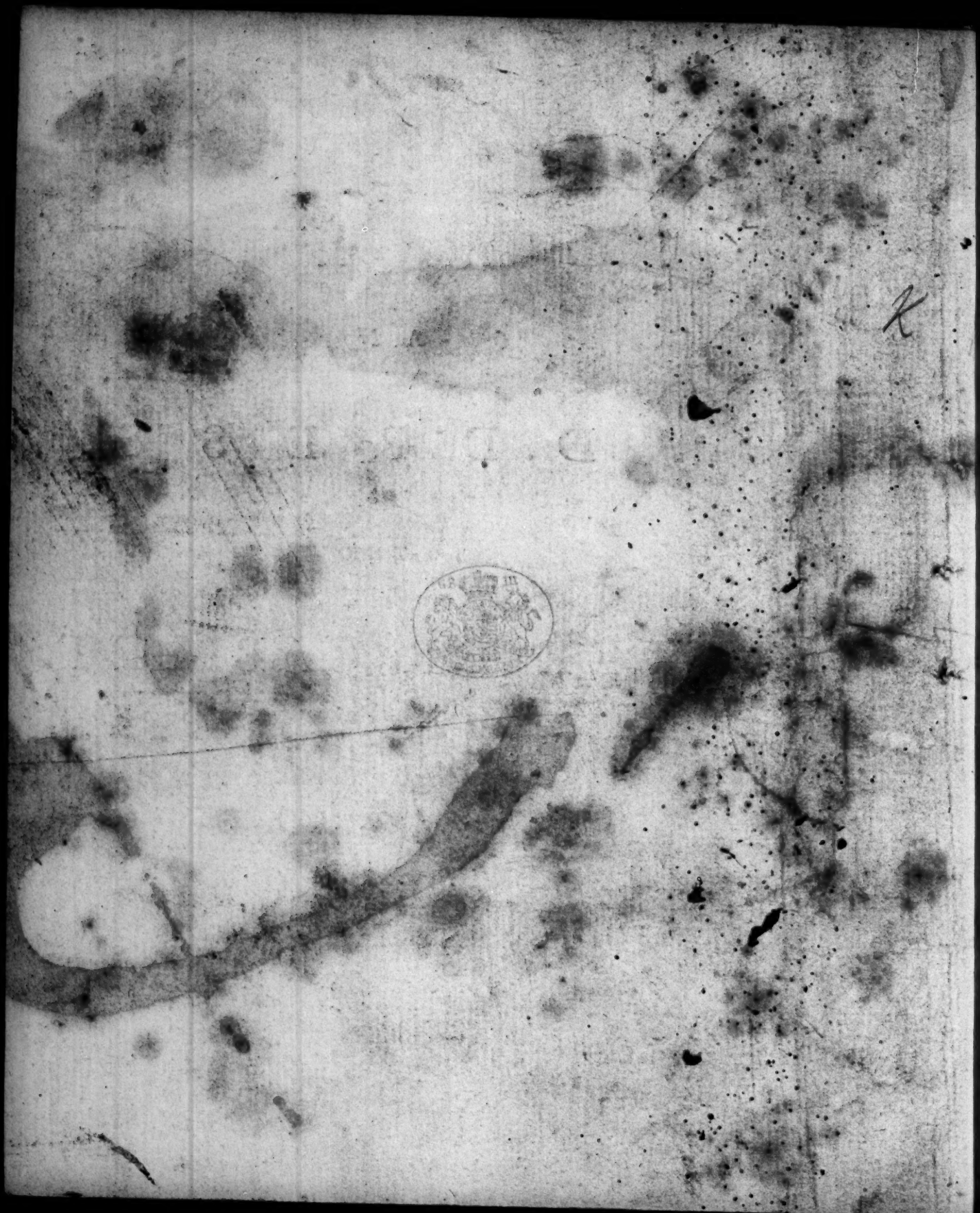
28 Jan. 1782



AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

INTERIOR CABINET.

LONDON.

Printed for J. DEBRETT, (Succeſſor to Mr. ALMON) oppoſite
BURLINGTON-HOUSE, in PICCADILLY. 1782. Jan. 28

G.R.
III.

AN

ADDRESS, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

AFTER making the firſt compliments to the Principal of the Houſe, it is uſual to pay our devoirs to the reſt of the family. A failure in this etiquette of politeneſs is commonly called a want of good breeding. The propriety, therefore, of addreſſing you, Gentlemen, after paying the firſt compliments to Mr. Jenkinſon, being a ſettled point of good manners, a total neglect of this attention could not be aſcribed to any other motive than a premeditated public affront.

Entertaining a profound reſpect for gentlemen of the firſt rate character in politics, though not of the firſt rank either in the State or in the Country, it is, with great ſubmiſſion, that I preſume to ſteal a few of thoſe precious moments which are ſo happily employed in ſtudying the map of the Britiſh empire, reduced according to act of parliament: and to ſolicit your attention to ſome things, in the relation and deſcription of which, if I have not the happineſs to pleaſe the ear, I hope I ſhall not have the mortification to offend the underſtanding.

Since the commencement of the preſent reign, the Tories have frequently ſaid, that the Government of a kingdom, was in all reſpects, ſimilar to that of a private family. You, Gentlemen, have flattered the Tories, until you have almoſt verified their aſſertion; for the dominions of the Britiſh Empire ſeem to be verging to a diminution, that leaves little more than what they have, for many years, conſidered a family patrimony.

Shall we, in this limited ſenſe, delineate your happy progreſs? or ſhall we conſider the ſplendid ſyſtem which has rendered the knowledge of a powerful and extenſive empire perfectly eaſy to the meaneſt capacity?

The former is a deſign, perhaps, beſt confined to your private ſketches: for the reader's entertainment, I will attempt the latter.

There are poſitions in every ſcience, which to explain, and render intelligible, ſhould be taken at the root. In the order of time, therefore, as well as beſt ſuited to the argument, I will begin with the origin of your ſituation, or office. The plan was laid down, or in the phraſe of Audley-ſtreet, the *Inſtitution commenced*, of an Interior Cabinet, conſiſting of Confidential Friends, at Leiceſter-Houſe, before the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle; under the auſpices of a Prince, whoſe memory and character are not honoured, by a patronage as dangerous to the Conſtitution as it was ungrateful to the friends of his family. Philip deſigned, and Alexander executed, but Macedon was undone.

The cloven foot of this dark ſyſtem firſt appeared in that well-known paper, which was delivered to the Tories, containing a number of *promiſes* for the ſupport of certain meaſures, whenever the Prince ſhould aſcend to a higher ſtation. It was Guy Fawkes's dark lanthorn, with juſt light enough to detect the deſign; and was extinguiſhed, for that time, by the death of the executioner. The principle, however, did not ſleep long; it roſe again; and though the object was changed, the purpoſe was the ſame. Inſtead of England, the minor

cabinet

cabinet reſolved to begin with America. Mr. Jenkinſon was the firſt inſtrument in this *efficient* buſineſs. He gained his information of the Colonies, from a certain naval officer, who came from Boſton, becauſe he could not ſtay there; and whom he afterwards made a conſul abroad; partly for reward, and partly to ſend him out of the way. From this man's malicious and falſe repreſentation of the people of America, the Interior Cabinet received their firſt impreſſions, and formed their firſt ideas, of that diſtant, but great and invaluable country. From the ſame ſource, Mr. Jenkinſon drew his *Regulations*; which became the rubric of the cabinet; and laid the foundation of the ruin of the Empire. A ſyſtem of alterations in the conſtitutions of the colonies was ſuggeſted by the ſame informant; which, perfectly agreeing with the view of the Interior Cabinet, was adopted. When the peace of Paris was concluded, the army in America was not withdrawn: various pretences were made for keeping it there; ſuch as an Indian war, and the neceſſity of having garriſons in the back ſettlements. The government of the country was divided into military diſtricts; and a brigadier-general put in each, depending ſolely on the commander in chief, who was totally independent of the civil power. The other officers of the crown, were put under it's pay and direction. To ſupport all this, which was no more than the baſis of the ſyſtem, it was neceſſary to create a fund, to eſtabliſh a revenue. The machine of government in America, like that in England, was to be managed by corruption. This principle gave riſe to the ſtamp act. The Interior Cabinet were the ſprings and conductors of this buſineſs; they were the firſt movers, and inceſſant urgers of it. And however circumſtances may have changed, by fluctuations in the official departments, the Interior Cabinet has remained ſteady; has been uniform to its firſt great object; viz. *to new model the government of the colonies*. The project has failed;—the colonies are loſt:—and, by your aſſiſtance, are become ſtates. Whoever takes a ſlight view of

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the meaſures of the Cabinet, with this microſcope, will ſee them regularly progreſſive, perfectly ſyſtematic, to that one point. Lord Chatham ſaid, when he recommended the repeal of the ſtamp act, "I rejoice that America has reſiſted. Three millions of people, ſo "dead to all the feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to ſubmit to be "ſlaves, *would have been fit inſtruments to make ſlaves of the reſt.*"

The deſign was diſcovered. Mr. Jenkinſon is not a ſtateſman. His political architecture is formed upon principles contrary to the rules of Palladio: his elevation is ſeen, before his foundation is completed. Lord Bute ſeems to have treated you with ſome contempt, when he placed Mr. Jenkinſon at the head of your Board, and permitted no important communication with the principal, but through him. The weakeſt amongſt you, muſt ſee and feel him inadequate to the ſtation. What are all his plans? Even thoſe againſt the Houſe of Bourbon, are counteracted before they are ready for execution. What are his plans of war? What have been his attempts for diſtreſſing the enemy? The whole of his attention, the whole of his judgment, all his care, all his anxiety, and all his exertions, have been directed to the American war. The ſucceſs has proved adequate to the wiſdom of the meaſure.

What is his ſyſtem of foreign policy? Let us judge of that by the circumſtance of his being not only deſtitute of a ſingle ally, but unable to procure one. This loſs of friends, is owing to the plan of government by an Interior Cabinet. While the Court of Great Britain maintains an Interior Cabinet of power, that is independent of, and ſuperior to, the Official Miniſters, no Potentate will, or can be allied to us. While our court keeps a double council, one ſecret and one public, playing backwards and forwards, from the official miniſters, to the efficient cabinet, and from theſe elſewhere; and all of them, one after another, diſavowing each other; no prince can truſt us, can act with us, or can negotiate with us; and the fact is, that none does. Foreign ambaſſa-

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dors cannot talk with a miniſter, in whom they are poſitive there is no power. They cannot talk with the Interior Cabinet, who, not being official, are not bound by any thing they ſay. Experience has ſhewn, in ſeveral inſtances, that the latter can no more be believed, than the former can be depended upon.—Some weeks after the treaty between France and America was ſigned at Paris, the Official Miniſters were aſked, in both houſes of parliament, if they knew of ſuch treaty being ſigned. They ſeverally declared they did not. When Lord Stormont returned from Paris, he aſſerted, in his firſt ſpeech in the Houſe of Lords, that he had ſent repeated intelligence of that treaty, both while it was in agitation, and after it was ſigned. Yet the Official Miniſters did not ſupport their firſt aſſertion; nor ſeem to feel any diminution of character, in the impeachment ſo publicly made of their veracity. Not knowing what meaſures would be taken, they denied the receipt of the information. Your directions went no farther. You came to no determination of breaking with France, until the French miniſter in London inſulted you with an avowal of the treaty. While you are poaching for opinions, the Official Miniſters aſſume the nature of camelions, and take their various complexions from the different grounds upon which they are placed by your abſolute authority. How contemptible did Lord Rochford appear at the court of France in the affair of Corſica! His inſtructions from the Official Miniſters ordered him to hold one language, while the ſecret aſſurances you made to the French ambaſſador in London, were the direct contrary. If Lord Rochford had declared all he knew when he came home, he might have annihilated the ſyſtem of an Interior Cabinet. You were ſenſible of it, and therefore made him a ſecretary of ſtate. And if Lord Stormont had declared all he knew when he came from Paris, he might have done the ſame. But he preferred the honourable ſituation of being admitted one of the Interior Cabinet, and was alſo made a ſecretary of ſtate. Such men are moſt

proper for the correſponding departments, becauſe they are well acquainted with, and ready to ſubmit to, the ſettled routine of duplicity. Lord Weymouth held one language to the Marquis d'Almadovar in London, and afterwards wrote a different one to Lord Grantham at Madrid; upon the ſame ſubject, without any change of circumſtances to juſtify the alteration.* I could proceed to the relation of ſeveral other circumſtances, but theſe are ſufficient to ſhew that foreign Princes put no confidence in our Councils, becauſe our Counſellors are not *official*.

If an alliance with Ruſſia is thought politic and wiſe, which your friends have repeatedly ſaid, though it is a point upon which very able men have their doubts, it would be a ſatisfaction to know the reaſons, by which you were influenced to refuſe the moſt preſſing invitations a few years ago. The ſame Interior Cabinet, compoſed of the ſame individuals, ſubſiſted (as it *now* does) when thoſe invitations were made.

Ruſſia was, and England ought to have been, a friend to the Old Free Government of Sweden, which was founded upon a broader baſis than that of any other kingdom in Europe. The aſſiſtance of England was ſolicited to preſerve that Free Conſtitution. A trifling ſum was all that was aſked. It was refuſed. The conſequence was, that Sweden loſt her liberty, and Great Britain loſt the friendſhip of Ruſſia. Nor does the King of Sweden think he owes you the leaſt obligation for his ſucceſs.

How different is this from the conduct of France! The Americans ſolicit the aſſiſtance of an arbitrary king to preſerve their liberties; and obtain it. Our aſſiſtance, of only a pecuniary pittance,† is ſolicited to

* The fact is, he had *ſaid* too much, and was obliged to retract part of it in *writing*.

† The preſent Duke of Newcaſtle receives, for his own uſe, a much larger ſum in a ſingle year, than was required to preſerve the liberties of Sweden.

preſerve

preſerve the liberties and conſtitution of a nation; and it is refuſed! Are Frenchmen become friends to liberty, and are Engliſhmen her enemies? Had this ſmall requeſt been complied with, Ruſſia would have committed her negociation of peace with the Porte to the Britiſh ambaſſador at Conſtantinople. You are not unacquainted with the truth of this aſſertion. The auſpices of Great Britain, covering that negociation, would have ſecured to us the friendſhip and alliance of Ruſſia. What was the conſequence of your refuſal? The French ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, with the concurrence of his court, undertook the buſineſs, and managed it. After this, can you be ſurpriſed that Ruſſian ſhips carry naval ſtores to the French ports?—You have engaged not to touch them in the Baltic. And as to the Channel, the French are maſters of it whenever they pleaſe. But ſeize the Ruſſian veſſels; and what is the conſequence?—Behold the Armed Neutrality!—— Out of your own want of judgment and penetration hath ariſen this armed neutrality; which, if Heaven does not ſpeedily grant us an able Miniſter, will prove a fatal blow to the naval power of this country.

To the Inſtitution of your Interior and Uncontroulable Authority; to the implicit ſubmiſſion of the Official Miniſters; to your principles, which are inimical to all power except Prerogative, and even that, unleſs exerciſed by yourſelves; to your ſecret commands; to your little plans, and puerile reſentments; to your bad adviſers, and worſe informers; to your own incapacities, narrow ideas, and vain conceit; this country has been ſacrificed, her dependencies cut off, her armies annihilated, her marine debilitated, her honour diſgraced, and her rank among the nations for ever loſt.

From the ſyſtem of foreign policy, let us turn to that of domeſtic arrangement. A ſet of ſecond rate men are placed in the reſponſible offices, whoſe inability and inſignificance are their only recommendations. Having neither talents nor conſequence, they ſubmit implicitly

to your authority. They are fit for the purpoſe, and the purpoſe is fit for them. If any of them were to aſſume an independence of your power, the conſequence is obvious; having been taken from the ranks, the contumacy is puniſhed by diſmiſſion, without injuring any family character, or affecting any public ſervice. What man felt himſelf intereſted in the removal of Lord Hillſborough, to make Lord Dartmouth a Secretary of State? or in appointng Lord Bathurſt, Lord Preſident, in the room of Lord Gower? Such alterations make no difference to the nation. The Interior Cabinet is ſtill the ſame. Whether ſome ſimilar petit manœuvre is now in agitation, ſuch as whether Lord Sandwich, or Lord George Germain, ſhall go out, or both; or what ſecond, third, or fourth rate man, or men, ſhall ſucceed, is of no conſequence to the public. The ſame *confidential* people will be employed in the executive offices, and will continue their confidential communication with your agents; while their official correſpondence is carried on with the oſtenſible Miniſter, only for the purpoſe of making out a Gazette, or for laying the ſame before parliament, if *papers* ſhould be called for. But leſt this plan of controul ſhould not be ſufficient to ſecure the entire obedience of the official Miniſters, no Commander in chief has been ſent out, without having one of theſe confidential correſpondents placed over him, like a familiar of the inquiſition. A few *appearances* in an office may be changed, but *realities* will continue, while you, gentlemen, are "allowed to guide," and your confidential agents, or rather ſpies continue in the ſeveral departments. What are the crimes of Lord Sandwich, or Lord George Germain? In what inſtance have they diſputed your omnipotence? What ſtep have they taken without your approbation? What meaſure have they adopted, which was not your own?—But turn them out. The nation will not regret this exerciſe of your power. There may be a negative kind of merit in the appointment of ſucceſſors—

whoever

whoever you make choice of, cannot be more inſolvent in reputation; and if they ſhould prove refractory, your ſpies are ready to give information of their diſobedience.

When the Great Founder of your Inſtitution (I mean the Earl of Bute) committed the government of this country to other hands, he ſtationed in all the offices, one, or more, truſty confidents, upon whom he could firmly rely for intelligence of every buſineſs tranſacted in thoſe offices. The care and direction of theſe ſpies he entruſted to the management of his then ſecretary, but now deputy, Mr. Jenkinſon. His Lordſhip ſeems to have taken the hint from the practice of his countryman Macbeth. Shakeſpear makes Macbeth ſay,

> There's not a thane of them, but in his houſe
> I keep a ſervant fee'd

But Holingſhead, whom Shakeſpeare has followed, has it in theſe words, *viz.*

> " Macbeth had in every nobleman's houſe, one ſly fellow or other, in fee " with him; to reveal all that was ſaid or done, within the ſame; by which " ſlight he oppreſſed the moſt part of the nobles of his realm."

Even Lord North, though reared under the foſtering wing of Carleton houſe, Mr. Jenkinſon dares not truſt. His confidential amanuenſis in former days, Billy Brummell,* now William Brummell, Eſq. he ſtations *cloſe* to his Lordſhip, in the character of *private* Secretary. The late Lord Halifax felt the indignity, and the inſult, in ſtationing *one of the confidential* in his office; and when he was re-appointed Secretary of State in 1771, he attempted to break through the practice. The fact was publiſhed at the time in theſe words: " Lord Halifax is " a more recent inſtance of your aſſiduity in placing your ſpies. His " Lordſhip was entreated to ſucceed Lord Weymouth, who, upon " the apprehenſion of a war with Spain, quitted his poſt of Secretary

* When Mr. Jenkinſon lodged at Mrs. Brummell's, in Bury ſtreet, St. James's.

" of State. Lord Halifax accepted of the northern department, and " deſired to have his old friend, Mr. Lovell Stanhope, for his *commis*; but this was refuſed. However, he inſiſted upon his demand with " ſo much warmth, that the —— himſelf was obliged to come for- " ward. Mr. Frazer, an obſcure perſon, was *continued* in the place, " and Mr. Lovell Stanhope was *penſioned out* of the office." * Mr. Eden is *your* ſecretary to Lord Carliſle, and Mr. Knox is *your* ſecretary to Lord George Germain. There is a Brummell, or a Frazer in every office.

Among your other arts, one *chef d'œuvre* has been to ſow diſſenſion in every reſpectable family, to which your agents could gain acceſs; by engaging ſome junior, neceſſitous or avaricious branch of it, in the intereſt of the court by place or title: to ſet brother againſt brother, father againſt ſon, relation againſt relation, or in any manner to divide, diſturb, and deſtroy, the happineſs and ſtrength of the family. † The ſucceſs of this ſeduction has been contrived to operate two ways; firſt to weaken the natural intereſt of thoſe great names, who have diſapproved of the reducing ſyſtem of the Cabinet; and next, by the inundation of hired writers, and hired newſpapers, to abuſe the public judgment with unceaſing obloquy, that all Engliſhmen were alike, that all pretence to patriotiſm was a cheat, that the King was the only true patriot in the nation, ‡ &c. But as in all falſehoods, bad men are eager to prove too much, ſo here they were not content with reviling the living, but they calumniated the dead. The living were indolent, and truſting (perhaps too much) to the fairneſs of their characters, and the uprightneſs of their intentions, have not (as perhaps they ought, and certainly might) given the fulleſt and

* Letter to the Earl of Bute, printed in 1771, pages 26 and 27.

† The CAVENDISHES are a moſt diſtinguiſhed inſtance of public virtue, and fraternal honour, in reſiſting the ſeveral efforts and allurements made to divide them.

‡ Vide Mr. Smelt's ſpeech at York.

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moſt ſatisfactory replies to theſe wicked and general calumnies. The dead have met with a better fate; the hiſtorians of paſt times, the indubitable evidence of records, to ſay nothing of family papers, and collateral authorities, have proved the forgeries, falſehoods, and baſeneſs, with which the black and ungrateful attempts were made. Thanks to your malice, (for I muſt beg leave to uſe the word) your poiſoned arrows againſt the living, have loſt their venom in your attempts to vilify the dead.

It is impoſſible to view your conduct, and not be chilled with horror at your proceedings; whether, in a public ſenſe, reſpecting the meaſures of adminiſtration; or in a private ſenſe, reſpecting your attempts on individuals. In both ways, your practices have been deteſtable;—in the firſt you have undone the greatneſs of your country,—in the laſt you have endeavoured to deprive her of ſalvation.

What man who ſets any value upon his honour, (for there is a kind of juſtice which every man owes to himſelf, as well as to his country) will venture to unite with you? Will the Earl of Shelburne?—It is impoſſible! notwithſtanding the arts which have been induſtriouſly and inſidiouſly practiſed to give the appearance of an affirmative to this queſtion, and though many of your agents ſent it in letters to different parts of the country, during the late receſs, with a view to check the ſpirit of petitioning; a little time has ſhewn the falſehood and baſeneſs of the tale.——With whom was his Lordſhip to unite?—With Lord North! who ſometimes affects to have an opinion, and ſometimes confeſſes that he has none; who though ſet up by Lord Bute for a Financier, yet knows not the difference between the currency of Jamaica, and the ſterling of Great Britain; who though called the miniſter, has been frequently in a Minority; and who ſubmits to the inſult, becauſe it gives him a freſh claim to provide for another relation.—But the odium does not deſerve a ſerious refutation. I will only obſerve, that the report has been circulated with the vain expectation of ſowing jealouſy

amongſt his friends. But his friends, the friends of their country, know him too well; they know he will not, he cannot be ſeduced, by the falſe candour of a Speaker, to defraud his country of thoſe fair hopes of him, which his great abilities, unwearied perſeverance, and high ſpirit, have taught them to cheriſh; to ſtand upon any ground with the preſent miniſters, however ſpecious, and oſtenſibly juſtifiable. Hypocriſy has loſt her maſk; and whether the mace or ſceptre* dignify her ſtation, the Hyæna and Crocodile will ſtill be known.

As to the Marquis of Rockingham, the miniſters have felt the want of ſucceſs in that quarter. The attempt was made a little time ago, but his virtue was invulnerable. At that moment there happened to be no purpoſe to anſwer, by circulating a mountain of falſehood, covering a mole-hill of truth. The particulars of the attempt, however, ought not to have been conſigned to oblivion; for no matter what the views were on one ſide, the public ſpirit and incorruptible integrity of the other, are worthy of the notice of a grateful people. We cannot forget this noble Lord's patronage of that beſt of plans, for the reformation and purity of the Houſe of Commons, "the reſtraining all "perſons enjoying places under the Crown, from voting at elections "for members of Parliament." This effectual ſecurity for the Independence of Repreſentation, was introduced into the Houſe of Commons, by the late Mr. Dowdeſwell, in February 1770; and hath ſince been revived, in the preſent parliament, by Mr. Crewe, another county member, of great property, private worth, and moſt reſpectable character; but hitherto without ſucceſs; though it would unqueſtionably be found as great an improvement of the conſtitution without doors, as Mr. Grenville's palladium (brought in the ſame year) hath proved within. The encreaſing power of the Crown is the juſt object of our fears. Stop the courſe of that Leviathan, and the great outlines of the conſtitution will naturally return, and recover their original eſſence.

It was the power of the Crown, under a misdirection, that plunged us into the fatal American war, and that long train of disgraces and losses, which have flowed from it. It was the power of the Crown, under the same direction, that secured and continued a majority, against the honour and interest of the country. It was the power of the Crown, under the administration of the Earl of Bute, that instituted, and under his delegate, Mr. Jenkinson, still maintains, an Interior Cabinet; who possess all the powers of government, and exercise the most arbitrary controul over all the functions of it, and who are protected from responsibility, and encouraged by *closet* secrecy.

All good men who would unite to recover this almost ruined country, should first unite to restore the government of it to its proper and constitutional channel; to form an administration of men of judgment and integrity; who will not be dictated to by Lord Bute's confidants. When an administration is formed, that has no separate interest from that of the country, that has no dark underhand plots in the closet, who feel the dignity of their situation, and enjoy the confidence of their country, armed by honesty within, and strength without, great as our distresses are, England might yet recover.

I shall be told perhaps, that, however plausible such an administration may seem upon paper, it is nevertheless totally impracticable in office. If such language means any thing, it is this, That such an administration would be totally independent of Lord Bute's Substitutes, and therefore must not be appointed. In this sense, it is very true, that the thing is totally impracticable; because no man of character and abilities, will trust himself in such a dangerous and despicable situation, as that of the present ostensible Minister.——But who has made it impracticable? You have. You have proscribed all the men

of tried virtue, and great talents in the kingdom; and keep ſuch cloſe watch over every avenue at St. James's, that none are permitted to enter, whoſe principles and ſpirit might emancipate the country. And as to Weſtminſter, every queſtion there ſhews, that your majority is as literally in harneſs as your coach horſes.

It is the hopeleſs proſpect of recovery, that enfeebles government; that throws a languor upon all your operations; that chills all public ſpirit; that withholds all public confidence, and anticipates future misfortunes, from the known cauſes of the paſt.——What ſignifies exertion, if it is miſapplied? To what purpoſe ſhall we raiſe immenſe ſums, if they are improperly expended? Why think of foreign poſſeſſions, if we have not ſhips to protect them?

If America is loſt, as moſt certainly it is, as far as relates to the ſubjection of it, that loſs is to be aſcribed to Lord Sandwich.——The fleet in America, from the commencement of the war to the preſent hour, has never been adequate to the ſervice. The ſurrender of Lord Cornwallis is entirely owing to this inſufficiency of the fleet. If the ſea had been kept open, Lord Cornwallis could have been in no danger. Why it was not kept open, Lord Sandwich ought to anſwer. It certainly *might* have been kept open, and it certainly *ought*. And *if* the firſt Lord of the Admiralty aſſured the Secretary of State that it *ſhould* be kept open, the neglect and the miſdemeanor are the greater.

It was one of Lord Sandwich's boaſts, ſince the commencement of the triple war, with America, France, and Spain, that his fleet was *competent* to the ſervice. This was upon one of the applications made to his Lordſhip, and to Lord North, and Lord George Germain, by the Weſt-India Planters. Lord Sandwich, upon that occaſion, talked much of his *competent* fleet, and treated the apprehenſions of the Planters with a meretricious laugh.

It would give every good ſubject inexpreſſible pleaſure, to find this *competent* fleet any where, but in the mouth of Lord Sandwich. But if, after a fair and minute Enquiry, it is no where elſe to be heard of, how great, vexatious, and humiliating, muſt be our diſappointment? and how keen and bitter muſt reflection make it, if we recollect the victorious and powerful fleet left at the end of laſt war; the repaired and *efficient* ſtate of that fleet, when that ever-honoured veteran Lord Hawke quitted the Admiralty; and which fleet Lord Sandwich received on the day of his appointment:* and if we look into the journals of the Houſe of Commons, and take a view of the immenſe ſums annually granted by parliament, for *building* and *repairing*, over and above the charges for wear, tear, and ordinary, *ſince Lord Sandwich came to the Admiralty*, it muſt appear to every man of the plaineſt underſtanding, that an Enquiry into the cauſes of the decline of the fleet, and the expenditure of the public money granted for the ſame, was never more neceſſary than at this time. It ought to have been done three or four years ago. And it ought to be done every year.

At the end of the laſt war, the French had not ten ſhips of the line fit for ſervice. At this time they have upwards of one hundred and twenty-five, beſides frigates. At the firſt bluſh of the fact, ſuch a difference may ſeem aſtoniſhing; and in the moment of ſurpriſe, the familiar queſtion would be put, How have the French done this? But a little recollection will remove all ſurpriſe, and the anſwer will be obvious—the French have not done it. You have done it. Your weak and wicked policy has done it. You have opened ſources to France, for her marine, which ſhe neither had, nor knew of before. You have given to her the naval ſtores of both Ruſſia and America.

Her-

* Lord Hawke quitted the poſt of firſt lord of the Admiralty at the end of the year 1770, and Lord Sandwich was appointed his ſucceſſor at the beginning of 1771.

Her marine miniſters have not been men of debauched, profligate lives, whoſe nights have been ſpent in brothels, bawling an obſcene catch, beating a drum, or contriving a blaſphemous burleſque on the rites of religion. On the contrary, they have been ſober, grave, wiſe men; beſtowing a conſtant attention to the duties of their office, ſolicitous of information, acceſſible to the intelligent, and open to conviction. There was a time, when this deſcription belonged to our miniſters; but that time, and thoſe miniſters, are no more.

At the end of the laſt glorious war, we had ninety ſhips of the line, and nineteen of fifty guns, beſides frigates, in Commiſſion.

When that gallant ſeaman, Lord Hawke, whoſe memory will be for ever dear to Engliſhmen, left the Admiralty at the end of the year 1770, Lord Sandwich, who immediately ſucceeded him, found, or received, of that fleet, which he pretended to have fitted out in the year 1779, and of which he made ſuch great boaſt, eighty-one ſhips of the line.

General aſſertions are ſo eaſily made, that, to avoid all cavil upon this laſt fact, I will ſtate the condition of the ſeveral ſhips, with their names.

Of Admiral Keppel's Fleet.

The following were ready for Service, and in Commiſſion, in December 1770.

Guns.	Ships Names.	When new, or in what Degree repaired before 1771.	Year when completed
100	Victory	New	1765
90	Queen	New	1769
90	Sandwich	Uncertain	
90	Ocean	Small Repair	1770
74	Monarch	New	1765
74	Shrewſbury	Uncertain	
74	Robuſte	New	1764

Guns.

Guns.	Ships Names	When new, or in what Degree repaired before 1771.	Year when com-pleted
74	Terrible	New	1753
74	Egmont	New	1768
74	Eliſabeth	New	1769
74	Reſolution	New	1770
74	Defiance	New	1763
74	Centaur	Large Repair	1770
74	Ramillies	New	1763
64	Exeter	Middling Repair	1768
64	Bienfaiſant	Middling Repair	1770
64	Worceſter	New	1770

Of the ſame fleet were on the Stocks in December 1779,

90	Formidable		
90	Prince George		
74	Berwick		
74	Cumberland		
74	Defiance		
64	Stirling-Caſtle		

Were lying fit for Service, or in Commiſſion, in December 1770, of Byron's, Barrington's, and Parker's Fleets, in the Weſt-Indies (Admiral Rowley's ſhips, having been enumerated before in Admiral Keppel's fleet, are omitted here),

74	Suffolk	New	1765
74	Magnificent	New	1766
74	Royal Oak	New	1769
74	Prince of Wales	New	1765
74	Albion	New	1763
74	Fame	Middling Repair	1768
70	Somerſet	Large Repair	1770
70	Boyne	New	1766
70	Yarmouth	Thorough Repair	1762

Guns.	Ships Names.	When new, or in what Degree repaired before 1771.	Year when completed
64	St. Albans	New	1764
64	Trident	New	1768
64	Raiſonable	New	1768
50	Warwick	New	1767

Of the ſame fleet were on the Stocks in December 1770,

90	Princeſs Royal		
74	Conqueror		
74	Grafton		
74	Culloden		
64	Monmouth		
64	Ruby		

Of the other ſhips commiſſioned by Lord Sandwich in 1779, for different ſervices, or lying fit for Service—there were fit for Service, or in Commiſſion, in December 1770,

100	Britannia	New	1763
100	Royal George	Thorough Repair	1767
90	Blenheim	New	1761
90	Union	Uncertain	
90	Barfleur	New	1768
90	London	New	1766
90	Namur	Small Repair	1770
80	Princeſs Amelia	Middling Repair	1765
80	Cambridge	Small Repair	1765
74	Ruſſel	New	1764
74	Canada	New	1765
74	Hercules	Uncertain	
74	Invincible	New	1765
74	Kent	Middling Repair	1770
74	Arrogant	Docked	1770
74	Torbay	Large Repair	1770
74	Dublin	Middling Repair	1767
74	Marlborough	New	1767

Guns.

Guns.	Ships Names.	When new, or in what Degree repaired before 1771.	Year when compleated
74	Ajax	New	1767
74	Lenox	Middling Repair	1767
74	Triumph	New	1764
70	Orford	Large Repair	1767
64	Europe	New	1765
64	Prudent	New	1768
64	Intrepid	New	1770
64	Aſia	New	1764
64	Eſſex	Middling Repair	1767
64	Modeſte	Middling Repair	1767
60	Dunkirk	Middling Repair	1768
60	Yarmouth	Uncertain	
60	Panther	Large Repair	1768
60	Rippon	Uncertain	
50	Saliſbury	New	1769
50	Portland	New	1770
50	Antelope	Small Repair	1769

Of the ſhips commiſſioned by Lord Sandwich in the year 1779, for different ſervices, there were on the Stocks in December 1770, the Bedford, Briſtol, Lion, and Nonſuch, all of 74 guns. So that of the fleet fitted out in 1779, there were in December 1770,

Fit for Sea	65
And on the Stocks	16
	81

The force of which was compoſed of three of 100 guns, eleven of 90, two of 80, thirty-ſix of 74, four of 70, fifteen of 64, four of 60, and four of 50, carrying 5942 guns.

Of the above, Lord Sandwich repaired only nine to the 31ſt of December 1774; and that was occaſioned by the ſervices they had been employed in *ſince* 1770. There were alſo ſhips in Commiſſion in the year 1770, which are not included in the above liſt, becauſe they were broken

broken up between the years 1770 and 1779, on account of ſervices performed *after* the year 1770.

As to the Timber, there was near ſeven months conſumption in the yards, when Lord Hawke went out, and proper contracts were made for it. The moſt favourable ſeaſon alſo was coming on; the Britiſh timber being laid into the yards about April or May; the foreign about July or Auguſt. From the year 1767 to the end of 1769, ſeventy-four thouſand, eight hundred and ſixty-ſeven loads of Britiſh oak timber and plank were laid into the king's yards.

Another circumſtance not leſs important is, that beſides this powerful fleet which Lord Sandwich received from Lord Hawke, Lord Sandwich broke up, in the four firſt years of his adminiſtration, the following two and thirty ſhips:

A liſt of ſhips taken from the Navy by Lord Sandwich, from the 31ſt of December 1770, to the 31ſt of June 1775.

Prince 90, broken up in Plymouth yard 1775
St. George 90, ditto Portſmouth 1773
Norfolk 74, ditto ditto 1774
Reyna 74, Spaniſh built, ſold or broken up
Tyger 74, ditto
Infanta 74, ditto, ſold in April 1775
Dorſetſhire 70, broken up in Chatham yard 1774
Vanguard 70, ditto Portſmouth 1775
Swiftſure 70, ſold or broken up
Devonſhire 70, ditto
Lancaſter 70, broken up in Portſmouth yard in 1773
Warſpight 74, ditto or ſold
Africa 64, ſold or broken up at Blackwall 1775
St. Antonio 64, ſold, Spaniſh built, 1775

St.

St. Anne 64, broken up or ſold, French built
Hero 74, broken up at Plymouth 1774
Alcide 64, French built, broken up or ſold
Edinburgh 64, Engliſh ditto, ditto
Anſon 60, ditto, ditto
Dreadnought 60, a hulk to receive men from ſhips in dock at Portſmouth
Achilles 60, ditto, for ditto purpoſes
Windſor 60, ditto, ditto
St. Florentine 60, French built, a breakwater at Sheerneſs
Edgar 60, Engliſh built, a ditto
Montagu 60, ditto, ditto
Jerſey 60, an hoſpital ſhip 1771
Nottingham 60, a breakwater, broken up in 1773 or 1774
America 60, broken up or ſold
Prince of Orange 60, converted in ſheer-hulk at Sheerneſs
Revenge 64, a guard-ſhip at Sheerneſs, and a good frame
Weymouth 60, worn out in the Eaſt Indies, and broken up or ſold
York 60, worn out in ditto.

The reaſon which Lord Sandwich's friends have given for breaking up theſe ſhips is, that Lord Hawke intended to break them up. But it is a miſtake; moſt, if not all of them, were intended to have been repaired. Eight of them were upon Lord Hawke's liſt as ſerviceable, and when he left the admiralty, the whole of theſe, except the Africa, were abroad upon particular ſervices. The Prince and St. George might have been cut down, for their frames were remarkably ſound, and they would have made moſt excellent 74 gun ſhips: as hath been demonſtrated by the Torbay, which is a 74 gun ſhip, cut down from a 90 in the year 1749; and was eſteemed one of the moſt valuable and beſt-ſailing ſhips of her

rate in the ſervice, laſt war. It may therefore be reaſonably ſuppoſed, that it would have been more for the intereſt of the nation to have reduced them, particularly as Lord Sandwich has complained ſo much of the want of timber.

Other firſt Lords of the Admiralty, whenever they have thought proper to break up ſhips, have always built to repair the loſs. During the ſame period that Lord Sandwich broke up the preceding thirty-two ſhips, he built *only* ſeven, viz.

Prince George 90, Chatham 1772.
Princeſs Royal 90, Portſmouth 1773.
Grafton 74, Deptford 1771.
Cumberland 74, ditto 1774.
Conqueror 74, Plymouth 1774.
Defiance 64, Woolwich 1772.
Monmouth 64, Plymouth 1772.

His lordſhip could not be ignorant of the prodigious progreſs the French were making in their marine. He ſaid himſelf that the miniſter who had not a fleet able to face that of the Houſe of Bourbon, deſerved to loſe his head.

Having taken a view of the ſtate of the navy at the end of the year 1770, let us now take another view of it at the beginning of the year 1780, which will ſhew the progreſs Lord Sandwich made to keep pace with the enemy.

But, firſt, it is not improper to obſerve, that the American War commenced in April 1775; the French Reſcript was delivered in March 1778; and on the 28th of September 1778, the Spaniſh Ambaſſador in London, delivered to Lord Weymouth a written paper, in which the Catholic King ſays, "That in ſpite of his wiſhes and pacific

"diſ-

" disposítions, he *foresees*, that the circumstances of the present war, must " *oblige him to become a party.*" The Spanish Declaration, which, in substance, contained an approbation of the treaty concluded between France and America, was dated on the 30th of October 1778 *. And although the Spanish Rescript, was not delivered in London until June 1779, yet it is impossible that these papers should be unknown to the first Lord of the Admiralty. At the end of the year 1779, therefore, he had been *convinced* of the *certainty* of a Spanish war, at least fifteen months; he had been engaged in a French war, without any remarkable success, almost two years; and in an American war, with the same fate, almost five years. With all these *necessities* for, and *spurs* to *exertion*, yet what was the State of our Navy, at the end of the year 1779?——The following is a List of all the Ships of the Line, which were in Commission, or fit for Service, in the month of December 1779.

	Guns.		Guns.
Britannia	100	Union	90
Royal George	100	Foudroyant	80
Victory	100	Ajax	74
Duke	90	Albion	74
Formidable	90	Alexander	74
London	90	Alfred	74
Namur	90	Alcide	74
Ocean	90	Bedford	74
Prince George	90	Berwick	74
Princess Royal	90	Canada	74
Queen	90	Centaur	74
Sandwich	90	Conqueror	74

* See the Remembrancer for 1778-9, page 165.

Cornwall

	Guns.		Guns.
Cornwall	74	Royal Oak	74
Courageux	74	Ruſſel	74
Culloden	74	Robuſte	74
Cumberland	74	Shrewſbury	74
Edgar	74	Suffolk	74
Defence	74	Sultan	74
Egmont	74	Superbe	74
Elizabeth	74	Terrible	74
Fame	74	Thunderer	74
Grafton	74	Triumph	74
Hector	74	Valiant	74
Invincible	74	Vengeance	74
Magnificent	74	Arrogant	74*
Marlborough	74	America	64
Monarch	74	Aſia	64
Montague	74	Belleiſle	64
Prince of Wales	74	Bienfaiſant	64
Ramillies	74	Boyne	64
Reſolution	74	Burford	64

* It is worth while to remark that this ſhip had been one of Lord Hawke's guardſhips, and was condemned as unſerviceable when Lord Sandwich came to the board. She was moored head and ſtern as a break-water, in Rotten-row, in Portſmouth harbour, where every gale of wind from S. W. and N. E. muſt have wrung her exceedingly. In November 1774, notwithſtanding this, to ſhew the inconſiſtency of the preſent admiralty, ſhe was ordered to be repaired; and it appears by the eſtimates of the navy, dated 13th of December, 1774, that ſhe required a repair only between ſmall and middling. I leave any reader to judge whether ſhe muſt not have been a very good ſhip in December 1770, or otherwiſe, lying moored in that ſituation four years, muſt have totally deſtroyed her.

Defiance

	Guns.
Defiance	64
Eagle	64
Europa	64
Exeter	64
Intrepid	64
Lion	64
Monmouth	64
Nonſuch	64
Raiſonable	64
Ruby	64
St. Albans	64
Sterling-Caſtle	64
Trident	64
Vigilant	64
Worceſter	64
Yarmouth	64
Prudent	64
Medway	60
Panther	60
Rippon	60
Blenheim	90
Princeſs Amelia	80
Buffalo	60
Dunkirk	60
Total	86

Theſe four, ſtrictly ſpeaking, were only fit to lie as guardſhips at Spithead, or the Nore.

Notwithſtanding all the pretended exertions of the firſt Lord of the Admiralty, and notwithſtanding the grants of all the ſums of money he has aſked for; ſums which have been enormous, and have exceeded all former example, and if compared with the ſums granted for the ſame ſervices, during the moſt expenſive years of the late war, would exceed the poſſibility of belief, if the votes and journals of the Houſe of Commons were not indiſputable: What is the State of the Navy at *this time*, with the addition of five Spaniſh ſhips, and two Dutch ſhips, which have been taken?—Is it as reſpectable as it was at the *concluſion* of the laſt war?——It is not.

I forbear to be more particular with regard to the *preſent time*, becauſe it would be ſaid I am giving information to the enemy. But the grants of Parliament can be no ſecret. The money granted during the laſt war, for building and repairing ſhips, &c. from 1755* to the end of 1763, was

* The war was not declared till May 1756.

1,508,000l. Any Gentleman may ſee it by turning over his journals. And this ſum left a fleet of ninety ſhips of the line, nineteen of fifty guns, and ſeventy-eight frigates!

What Lord Hawke left we have ſeen.

Yet the *ſingle* charge of building and repairing, (for though two names, they make but one article, in the general accounts) over and above what is ſuppoſed to be done, under the heads of wear and tear, and ordinary, *ſince Lord Sandwich came to the head of the Admiralty*, viz. from 1770 to the end of 1781, amounts to the amazing ſum of 5,179,800l. † and notwithſtanding the expenditure, or pretended expenditure of this aſtoniſhing ſum, and the very reſpectable fleet which Lord Hawke left, yet the Britiſh fleet, is, at this day, inferior to that of France *alone!* And, if poſſible, to add to our calamity, even this fleet, ſmall as it is, is miſdirected, miſapplied, and improperly ſtationed. Witneſs, the late eſcape of the French fleet from Breſt, under Monſ. Guichen; notwithſtanding we had ſhips enough to have totally defeated that fleet, and taken all, or great part of their invaluable convoy.

If Commodore Stewart's ſquadron, of eight ſhips of the line, which were ſtationed in the Downs, had, after the Dutch fleet were ſuffered

† Sums granted by parliament for building and repairing ſhips, from 1771 to 1781,

	£.		£.
1771	423,747	1777	465,500
1772	375,939	1778	488,695
1773	421,554	1779	579,187
1774	420,729	1780	697,903
1775	297,379	1781	670,016
1776	339,151		5,179,800

Suppoſe the ſhips of the line to coſt in building, upon an average, thirty thouſand pounds each, this ſum would have BUILT a larger navy than we now have, if even Lord Hawke had not left a ſingle ſhip fit for ſervice.

to

to go quietly paſt them, been ordered to join Admiral Kempenfelt at Portſmouth, or off Uſhant, and there was time ſufficient for ſuch a junction, a complete victory muſt have been gained over Monſ. Guichen. Or, if, for reaſons of ſtate, Commodore Stewart's ſquadron could not have been ſent, there were no reaſons againſt ſending Sir George Rodney's. They were ready and could have joined Admiral Kempenfelt in a ſhorter time. It was a great, and moſt inviting opportunity, loſt.

Does the firſt Lord of the Admiralty mean to ſay, he did not know that the French had twenty ſhips of the line ready to ſail from Breſt, when he ſent Admiral Kempenfelt to fight them, with only twelve? If he does, he will not gain credit for his aſſertion; becauſe the fact was notorious all over London, ſome days before the meeting of parliament. Does he mean to ſay, that he had no more ſhips ready?—Let him then give a ſatisfactory account, how that defect happened; and why he did not *prepare* ſooner. This muſt, or ought, to bring on an Enquiry into the Expenditure of the enormous ſums, granted for the Service of the Navy; and what were the reaſons why Commodore Stewart's ſhips, or Sir George Rodney's, were not ordered to join Admiral Kempenfelt? The Nation has a right to be ſatisfied, on this head. Sixteen or ſeventeen ſhips, lying inactive when the moſt *important ſervice* in the Channel required their aſſiſtance, is ſuch a myſtery, that nothing but the moſt clear and incontrovertible truth, will wipe off the ſuſpicion, that it was neither neglect nor accident. The great Lord Chatham kept a fleet conſtantly cruizing in the Bay. This channel fleet, or weſtern ſquadron, as it is commonly called, effectually cut off the intercourſe between the French and their iſlands, ruined their trade and their nurſery for ſeamen. And when any of the ſhips were foul, they were always relieved before they came to port.

If I were to ſuggeſt other queſtions in order to facilitate the Enquiry into

into the Conduct of the Admiralty, the following would be ſome of them.

To what *cauſes* are we to aſcribe the expulſion of ſo many artificers from the king's yards; and their going abroad, where they meet with the greateſt encouragement from both our open and neutral enemies?

Lord Hawke's judgment as a ſeaman, I ſuppoſe will ſtand unimpeached. Why were not green ſhips built, according to his recommendation? If there is a want of ſeaſoned timber, why not make uſe of green timber?

Why have ſo many ſmall ſhips been built? Were they not built on purpoſe to give commands to young and inexperienced officers?—And has not the *ſeeming* want of men, been owing to this very meaſure?

As to the *cutting ſhips up*, though undoubtedly too many have been cut up, I will readily admit, that other firſt Lords of the Admiralty have done the ſame. But then it ſhould be remembered, that they never neglected to make an equivalent. They built *faſter*, to repair the loſs.

The examples of our enemies ought to have weight with us. After the engagement off Beachy-head in 1690, in which the Dutch fleet ſuffered conſiderably, a naval writer ſays, "Yet even this misfortune contri-" buted to raiſe their reputation at ſea, ſince, as ſoon as the States received " the news of it, they ordered fourteen men of war to be built and put " to ſea in as many days, which (ſays the author of Memoires Hiſtoriques) " may ſeem incredible to ſuch as are unacquainted with the power " of the Dutch at that time, and what they were able to do upon ex-" traordinary occaſions." See Entick's Naval Hiſtory, page 546. Will Lord Sandwich ſay, that they cannot do the ſame at this time?

It is but a little while ago that the French completed, in ſeven months, in Toulon yard, two ſhips of 64 guns each, from the laying of the keel.

Even

Even the Americans, who are not yet experienced in building ſhips of force, built the Raleigh frigate at Boſton in forty-two days.

The peace-arrangement of the navy before the war broke out deſerves attention. Did not Lord Sandwich order a very large number of marines to compoſe a part of it? And was not this unhappy, ill-judged meaſure the cauſe of *many* ſeamen going into foreign ſervice for bread? Was not a very uncommon number of marine officers kept on full pay; and did not even the frigates bear on their books, a captain of Marines?

The number of midſhipmen which ought to have been kept complete as a nurſery for officers, has been curtailed two thirds. The guard-ſhips, inſtead of ſixteen, were allowed to have but four; and even, to the great diſtreſs of thoſe young gentlemen, who, to learn their duty, were contented to do the duty of midſhipmen upon able ſeaman's pay, the clerks of the checque were ordered to diſcharge off the books all thoſe who were not rated.——From hence ariſes the preſent ſcarcity of people qualified for Lieutenants; and alſo the violation of the ancient and ſtanding rule of the navy, not to give commiſſions to any one under twenty years of age.——Children are now made officers, and by having the charge of a watch committed to them, the ſhip and crew are often in danger of being ſacrificed to ignorance and inexperience.

The total want of intelligence is another capital error. The effects of it are ſeen in the inattention to the ſudden exertions of the French in their dock-yards, previous to the breaking out of the war—in the entire ignorance of the enemy having ſuch a claſs of frigates as that of forty guns, eighteen pounders, until they had taken ſeveral of our frigates——in ſending Admiral Keppel to ſea with only two thirds of the force of the French——in giving no information to Sir Charles Hardy of the force of the combined fleet, when he was in ſearch of it; believing it to be inferior to his own; till by great accident, he received an account from the

Captain of the Marlborough, who ran through them after the Ardent was taken ——in Admiral Geary being alſo in the ſame ignorant predicament, never having the leaſt intelligence from Lord Sandwich, whether the fleet at Breſt were ſuperior or inferior, or when they were likely to ſail, or what number were equipping.

The abſurdity of ſtationing the Britiſh fleet off Breſt, is obvious to every body. In that ſituation they could not poſſibly be of any ſervice, or anſwer any other purpoſe, but for Lord Sandwich to give daily intelligence at Buckingham houſe, of the ſafety of the fleet, and to inſtil a favourable opinion of his great aſſiduity and alertneſs, from the excellent communication he kept up by means of cutters daily paſſing. This has been the reaſon that our grand fleet has never been able to perform the ſervices expected from it. The enemy always knew the exact ſtation of our fleet *to a league*, and of courſe always avoided it. This fatal war has been nurſed and protracted for private advantage, to the ruin of the kingdom, the loſs of the colonies, and the beggary of the merchants.

The ſtation of the grand fleet ought to have been off Cadiz; by which a junction of the French and Spaniards would have been prevented; the enemy's commerce interrupted; their galleons taken; Gibraltar covered; the Mediterranean trade of our enemies with the ocean, prevented; the treaty of alliance between the Emperor of Morocco and the King of Spain would not have taken place; nor Tetuan and Tangier ceded to the latter; our credit with foreign nations would have been preſerved, when they ſaw our fleet were maſters of that important paſs.

There are a few more points reſpecting the navy, of which I will only enumerate the heads, becauſe the diſcuſſion of them, it is preſumed, will be taken up by ſome able perſons, more thoroughly acquainted with them than I am.

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The ſending Admiral Darby to relieve Gibraltar, with an inferior force to the Spaniſh fleet, then cruizing off the Streight's mouth, and leaving the Victory and two other ſhips of the line behind, which ought to have ſailed with him. The ſending out Admiral Kempenfelt with a very inferior force to the French fleet, who were preparing to ſail upon an important expedition with eighty tranſports, an expedition which might have occaſioned the loſs of all our iſlands in the Weſt Indies. In order to form an impartial judgment of this laſt fact, it would be very proper to examine the captains and maſters of the ſhips of the line then in port, or who arrived in England within a month after Admiral Kempenfelt's ſailing. The French fleet did not ſail till ſix weeks after. Lord Sandwich had many opportunities to reinforce Admiral Kempenfelt ſilently and unobſerved. It matters little to the nation whether this neglect proceeded from inattention or ignorance: there ought to be no difference in the puniſhment, as both in this caſe are equally criminal.

When the ſtorehouſes at Breſt, two years ago, were quite empty of cordage and other ſtores, and thirty ſail of Dutch merchant-ſhips deeply laden with naval ſtores were known to be going from the Texel to Breſt, did the firſt Lord of the Admiralty ſtation Commodore Fielding with his ſquadron in the Downs, where, in that narrow part of the channel, the Dutch muſt have paſt in his ſight? Or did he ſtation him at St. Helen's, where he could not poſſibly effect any ſervice, owing to his diſtance from the French coaſt, along which the Dutch merchantmen ſecurely ſailed, and got ſafe into Breſt, during the ceremonial of introducing Count Byland to Spithead? Is it poſſible to aſcribe this circumſtance to ignorance.

The viſits of the firſt Lord of the Admiralty to the dock-yards are calculated to deceive the nation. The pretence of utility in them is laughed

laughed at by every officer. What benefit has reſulted from them? The quantity of ſtores in each yard he has from the Navy Board, as well as the ſtate of the ſhips under repair. The only conſequences of theſe viſits are convivial amuſements, and the loſs of the ſhipwrights and artificers time for ſeveral days in each yard.

The firſt Lord of the Admiralty ſeems to have neglected no opportunity of rendering himſelf obnoxious to the ſea-officers. He oppoſed with intemperance and virulence any encreaſe of their half-pay; and he made a very imprudent ſpeech, when he aſſerted that a ſhipwright was a much more uſeful man to his country, than the captain of a man of war. *

But of all circumſtances reſpecting the navy, that of a ſecret bank, which may with propriety be called the Naval Fund, demands the moſt particular attention. It is wholly at the diſpoſal of the firſt Lord of the Admiralty. This fund originally aroſe from the ſale of old ſtores, and other matters belonging to the dock-yards, which were really unſerviceable to the crown. It may be no improper ſuggeſtion, at leaſt the firſt Lord of the Admiralty will not think it one, that a Secret Committee ſhould be appointed to enquire into the ſtate of this fund. How it ariſes? Whether nothing but the produce of real old ſtores has been placed in it? Witneſſes upon oath would ſatisfactorily remove all ſuſpicions of corruption and venality. There is a ſingular fact, that ſeems to come under this head; which is, the Brilliant, a frigate of 36 guns, was ſold for a trifle; and though the tranſaction happened ſix or ſeven

* The application from the ſhipwrights for an encreaſe of wages, is ſuppoſed to have originated in a *private* promiſe of ſupport made by the firſt Lord of the Admiralty, in order to diſcountenance the encreaſe of pay to the ſea-officers; and to this circumſtance were owing the late diſturbances in the yards.

years

years ago, her bottom is ſtill ſo excellent, that without the leaſt repair, ſhe is now going to the Eaſt Indies.

The Navy of this country is our great Bulwark. Our all depends upon it; and if we neglect it, we hazard our exiſtence as a free and independent Nation. If there has been no abuſe of truſt; no miſapplication of money; no want of exertion; the Admiralty will be *honoured* by the Enquiry. If the contrary appears, Public Juſtice muſt wait on the Delinquent. But, if myſtery is obſerved; concealment is made; Committees are refuſed; partial information and partial evidence, are given; or the parliamentary manœuvres, of previous queſtion,—to leave the chair,—the order of the day,—are introduced, to ſuppreſs an intereſting part, or precipitate an improper concluſion; the public fears and apprehenſions will be confirmed; and ſuſpicions of corruption and treachery (no matter how unfounded) naturally ſucceeding, will ſhew themſelves in a general deſpondency, or ſomething worſe.

There is one man from whoſe *arts* and *influence* the navy of this Country has received a deeper wound, than from the efforts and politics of all our other enemies united. While the Admiralty continue to be adviſed, directed, and guided by that man, the nation is deprived of the ſervices and abilities of the beſt officers of the Fleet. England goes to war without her chiefs. While Sir Hugh Palliſer is patronized by Lord Sandwich, and Lord Sandwich is adviſed by Sir Hugh Palliſer, thoſe brave and intrepid commanders, who led our fleets to victory in the late glorious war, cannot, dare not, truſt themſelves in the hands of the Admiralty. How has every officer been treated, whoſe ſpirit was too independent to pay ſlaviſh homage to the Duumvirate? Have they not been uniformly cajoled, deceived, betrayed, and abuſed? Has there been any ſlander, any falſehood, any infamy, unattempted to deſtroy the character of Lord Howe? And has not authority done all it could to countenance and circulate thoſe calumnies? And as to

Admiral Keppel, it is notorious to the whole world, that the Conſpirators left no means uncontrived to take away his life.

It is not the loſs of North America only, that is to be aſcribed to this reduced, *incompetent*, and divided ſtate of the navy; but every other loſs, and diſgrace of the preſent war, may fairly and indiſputably be attributed, either immediately, or eventually, to the ſame cauſe. What is the ſtate of the Weſt-India Iſlands? Is it poſſible that the genius of Skakeſpear could deſcribe a ſituation more dangerous and alarming than that in which they now are? The iſlands of Granada, Dominica, St. Vincent's, Tobago, St. Euſtatius, and St. Martin's, have been taken, owing to the want of a naval protection; and moſt probably, three or four more iſlands are taken by this time. The whole of the Weſt India iſlands ſeem to be on the point of being loſt——they ſeem to be given up——to be abandoned——to the enemy——to their fate——or to any body that will take notice of them.

Notwithſtanding this very hazardous ſituation of the only Colonies we now have worth keeping, and into which they have been precipitated by the *incompetency* of the fleet, yet it is amongſt your *laſt* reſolutions to preſerve unalterable the preſent ſyſtem and arrangement of the Admiralty.

But your reſolutions reſpecting the American Secretary are ſtill unſettled. They have been various, contradictory, and nugatory—conſiſtent in nothing but duplicity. Upon the arrival of intelligence, that the French were ſuperior to your fleet in North America, as well as in the Weſt-Indies; that the French and Americans were ſuperior to you on land, and that a ſecond army had ſurrendered to the American flag,—you began to diſcover, what all the world had been convinced of before, that the American war was impracticable; and therefore, not in wiſdom, but in fear, you began to wiſh for peace. The deſire

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was precipitately formed, and, like all your other paſſions, originated more in an apprehenſion for your own ſafety, than a regard for either the honour of the king, or the intereſt of the country. At the meeting of Parliament, however, you reſolved to betray no ſymptom of this confidential wiſh. It was a ſecret with which the official miniſters were not entruſted. The ſpeech and addreſſes contained no traits of it. The Parliamentary machine proceeded as uſual; till at a proper time you ſhould have an opportunity of feeling the pulſe of the Country Gentlemen, upon a ſuppoſition of giving this noſtrum. This explains, what is otherwiſe inexplicable, why Lord North, the oſtenſible miniſter, when called upon, and willing to anſwer, Whether he meant to carry on the war or not, was ſo inexplicit and unintelligible, nothing poſitive could be drawn from him. And it likewiſe explains, why the American Secretary, who not being in the ſecret, but thinking he was holding the ſame opinion which had recommended him to your favour, and which prevailed in the Speech, and was followed with obedience in the addreſſes, ſaid, "that, if Great Britain gave up the ſo-"vereignty of America, this country was undone;" and for which he was attacked by the Lord Advocate, as it was an opinion which interfered ſo ſtrongly with your ſecret reſolution. It likewiſe explains, what did, and always muſt ſurprize every body who does not know you, why Lord Nugent declared in the Houſe, "that Parliament had "nothing left but to acknowledge the independence of America." And it likewiſe explains, why Mr. Rigby, who does know you, found it a proper time to confeſs, "that we were beaten, and muſt "give up the plan of the war.

At the time of your taking this reſolution of peace, you do not ſeem to have conſulted him, who is taught to think he has your confidence, and whoſe confidence you undoubtedly have, whether your opinion was

conſiſtent

conſiſtent with his honour and the dignity of the country, or was not an abdication of both?——Yet ſure it was a reſolution, which required more courage than you have ſhewn upon any other occaſion; and which muſt let all the world ſee, and make him whom it moſt concerned feel, how perfectly he was under your direction, when you had determined he muſt ſubſcribe his fiat to the ſurrender, in ſome form or other, of his ſovereignty over America.

The American Secretary now began to ſee, what he might have ſeen before, that it was time to reſign an office, the buſineſs of which, if continued, was deſtined to be conducted by opinions directly contrary to thoſe he had delivered in Parliament. During the late receſs for the Chriſtmas holidays, he gave notice of his deſire to reſign, in order that you might make your own arrangements. In conſequence of this notice, a meeting of the ſelect, or moſt confidential perſons of the Efficient Council, was held at Mr. Jenkinſon's houſe on the ſecond day of this month. A man of invention might write a curious debate, ſuppoſed to have happened at this extraordinary meeting. You did not agree. The meeting broke up without determining *who* ſhould come in, or whether the office ſhould ceaſe. Theſe are two points on which you ſtill differ. You had reſolved to part with one miniſter before you had provided a ſucceſſor. It is no uncommon thing in your Councils to take a reſolution without the leaſt conſideration of either the propriety of it, or conſequences which will attend it. If an oſtenſible Miniſter aſſumes but a momentary independence, that crime is fully ſufficient for his expulſion. For ten or twelve days all was ſuſpence, your doubts and difficulties encreaſed;——at length it was ordered, that a report ſhould be circulated that the office of Secretary of State for America ſhould ceaſe, that it ſhould drop, and the buſineſs of it return to and be divided between the office of the Southern Secretary and the Board of Trade, as formerly. While

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the world was amuſed with this report, you were quarreling amongſt yourſelves, in what *manner* this office ſhould ceaſe, or who ſhould undertake it, for a ſhort time. Not being able to ſettle this diſpute, you began to think that one of your own corps might venture into it; and upon the return of Monſ. de Guichen's fleet, in the American Phraſe, you *felt bold*, and almoſt reſolved, that Mr. Jenkinſon himſelf ſhould have it. But your courage is as temporary as your ſyſtem; and this plan is for the preſent laid aſide.

The return of the French fleet gave you freſh ſpirits, and perſevering in the reſolution to remove Lord George Germain, you thought the acquiſition of Sir Guy Carleton practicable, to ſucceed Sir Henry Clinton; and, to add one myſtery more, he has been brought to the cloſet.

Thus I have brought you to the preſent day,—to the natural conſequence of ſuch councils and ſuch eſtabliſhments,—to your ſtaking the dignity and intereſt of the country upon your ſmall games,—to your removing miniſters and officers, as though they were only cheſſmen on your board,—and to your undoing that very ſyſtem in ſupport of which you have undone the country. And ſhall only remark, that it is not quite impoſſible, you may begin to be jealous of ſome young rival riſing in the cloſet; who, whenever he is fully known, will be found to have real influence. He muſt not, therefore, upon your ſyſtem, be permitted to be well there. By your uſual meaſures—of dividing the noble families of the kingdom,—of diſſolving all parties founded on principle—of throwing the country into factions, which are influenced by corruption—of governing every part of the empire by diviſions;—it is poſſible you may diſcover, that your own ſafety will be endangered, unleſs you proceed one ſtep further. Windſor is the place of retirement;—the miniſters are never ſeen there;—but

Mr. Jenkinſon viſits his particular friend Dr. Douglas at any moment; — and *thereby hangs a tale.*

Any man who feels for the country, will look only to what is immediately neceſſary. Our preſent ſituation calls for a Miniſter of ſound judgment, capacious mind, and great comprehenſion; who can take a ſurvey "in his mind's eye," of the extended and expoſed condition of "all the Britiſh Dependencies: Who, in the reſources of his wiſdom, can prepare for danger; and from the focus, to which he draws all information, can frame the deſign, and direct the execution of effective operations.

It is a miſtake, to ſay that no ſuch miniſter can be found. Several might. But no man of reputation will truſt himſelf under an unſeen, an unknown, and unreſponſible controul. It is the inſtitution of your ſecret and unconſtutional authority, that prevents the exertion of abilities — that chills the hope of ſalvation. Is there *one* man, in whom the Nation can repoſe the ſmalleſt degree of confidence, willing to enliſt *under* Mr. Jenkinſon? — I will venture to ſay, No.

We have ſeen in theſe pages, proofs ſufficient, that your principles are as dangerous to the conſtitution, as your abilities are inadequate to the affairs of the State; and that your obſtinate adherence to the ſyſtem of *dark domination*, in ſpite of defeat, loſs of Empire, and glory, manifeſt ſuch a depravity of principle, ſuch a contempt for the nation, and diſaffection to the King, as no ſhame can correct, no diſtreſs can awaken, no gratitude can influence. How long we are fated to ſuffer calamity after calamity, the loſs of army after army, province after province, and iſland after iſland, is in the Great Diſpoſer of human events. I will therefore conclude, with a ſhort extract from a ſpeech of Sir William Wyndham, made in the year 1739. "I ſin-
"cerely pray to Almighty God, who has ſo often wonderfully pro-
"tected

" tected these Kingdoms, that he will graciously continue his protec-
" tion over them, by preserving us from that impending danger which
" threatens the Nation from without, and likewise from that impend-
" ing danger which threatens our Constitution from within."

I am, GENTLEMEN,

Jan. 28, 1782.

Your most humble Servant,

An Independent Whig.

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